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ESSEX COUNTY CONSTRUCTION CAREERS PROGRAM

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Preamble

The passage of the Educational Facilities Financing Act in July 2000, has created a unique opportunity to engage disparate sectors of the New Jersey community in collaborations that could have far reaching educational, economic and social impact.

To fulfill the mandate of the Supreme Court ruling in the Abbott v Burke decision, the State of New Jersey has launched a \$9 billion school construction and renovation program, the largest construction effort in the history of the state. In Essex County alone, the school construction program will exceed \$ 2 billion.

Vision for the Essex County Construction Careers Program

The Essex County Construction Careers Program is a collaboration of school district leaders, construction industry leaders and community agencies who have come together to ensure that young people in Essex County are successful in their efforts to enter all phases of the construction industry.

In Summer 2001, the program will sponsor a Pre-Apprenticeship Program for high school graduates who wish to enter a skilled construction trade. The Pre-Apprenticeship Program is supported by commitments of apprenticeship slots from cooperating trade unions and with job retention services from cooperating agencies.

If time and resources permit, a Summer 2001 Internship Program will also be offered. The summer internship program is designed to provide construction related on-the-job experience to high school graduates who are college bound. Construction management, engineering, and architectural firms will be asked to mentor and place high school graduates into summer internships.

While the summer timetable is very ambitious, the program is based on tried and true career development approaches that have been successful in ensuring that aspiring young people enter the construction industry.

It is anticipated that the collaboration will consider developing a year -round construction careers curriculum for in-school youth as well.

Guiding Principles:

The Essex County Construction Careers Program is based on the following educational and economic principles:

*** Modernized Facilities Support a Thorough and Efficient Education**

This program is urgently needed for the children who are presently being deprived of a thorough and efficient education in overcrowded, obsolete and dilapidated buildings. The Supreme Court affirmed that state government has a legal obligation to ensure that children receive an education in modernized, safe schools designed for their 21st century world.

***School Construction Should Support Community Economic Development**

It is widely accepted that children who are living in economically secure homes, have a better chance of academic success. The impact of the school construction program should be most positively felt in those school districts that have not only suffered from inadequate school facilities but also where the economic conditions of its families have been most disadvantaged. A construction careers program will ensure that local youth and adults have an opportunity to enter the construction labor market as competent, competitive workers.

***Construction Is a Viable Career Option**

In addition to the general educational value of new and modernized facilities, school construction should provide a career path for students who may be interested in the skilled trades, engineering, design and other construction related fields. On a national level, there is renewed interest in revamping high school curricula to reduce drop-out rates and to better prepare students for employment demands. The construction industry is a growing, changing field that would engage many young people, if properly introduced to them. Since school construction will be a major undertaking for at least 10 -15 years in New Jersey, we will have the opportunity to "grow" a whole new generation of professionals in the construction industry.

***A Successful Construction Careers Program Must be Linked to Prevailing Industry Practices**

and labor

In order to provide the best opportunity for well-paying and quality employment, a successful school-to-careers program must be linked to industry leadership that has a proven track record in sound employee development and employment practices. In the case of the construction industry, the most widely recognized programs are the apprenticeships that are jointly sponsored by trade unions and employers. For that reason, the ECCCP has formed a partnership with construction industry sponsored apprenticeship programs.

***School Construction Should Provide Incentives to Contractors Who Engage Industry Sponsored Apprenticeships.**

The apprenticeship programs that are jointly sponsored by the building and construction trades unions and cooperating contractors offer the best training and placement opportunities for aspiring local residents. Therefore, the agencies that are sponsoring the construction projects should include incentives and rewards to contractors who utilize this apprentice on their job sites.

***Emerging Demands Require an Expanded Construction Workforce**

expanding

The construction industry recognizes that the aging of the work force, the shrinkage of the labor pool and the rapid expansion of construction demands have created intense competition for recruiting new workers. Employers now welcome school to careers initiatives as a means to start early recruitment of new talent. The massive scope of school construction, as well as other major public and private jobs will place a high demand for new construction workers for at least 10 years.. The construction industry is reaching out to the broader community to find its share of new talent.

***Local Initiatives Require State Support:**

While the creation of collaborations of school districts, unions, contractors and community agencies are needed to make a Construction Careers Program work, the role of state government is also critical. Advocacy organization *has* urged the Economic Development Authority to adopt rules and regulations that not only mandate contracting with and hiring of local residents but will also provide funding for programs needed to support local participation. Funding for local pre-apprenticeship and internship programs as well as comprehensive reporting and monitoring systems are recommended. We support these recommendations. 77

Collaboration Tasks:

ALL PARTICIPANTS

To participate in the ECCCP, a stakeholder will commit to its principles and the tasks identified below by signing a copy of this Memorandum of Agreement. In addition, a stakeholder will identify a senior level representative to participate on the ECCCP Joint Steering Committee, which, at least initially, will oversee ECCCP actions.

Among other responsibilities, the Joint Steering Committee shall work with project staff and consultants to:

- (1) provide oversight to project staff and consultants
- (2) develop the curriculum for the Summer Pre-Apprenticeship and Internship programs and identify appropriate space and staff to undertake them
- (3) obtain and broker resources necessary to implement the program and subsequent ECCCP activities, and
- (4) undertake longer-range organizational planning for ECCCP, including whether the program can be operated by an existing agency or whether the Joint Steering Committee will manage its own programs..

Sector Specific Responsibilities:

In addition to these overall responsibilities, key stakeholders will be asked to undertake specific tasks related to their areas of expertise:

A. School District Participants

As a member of the Joint Steering Committee of the EssexCountyConstruction Careers Program, the School District agrees to undertake the following:

1. Recruitment of and outreach to students with skills, background, and interest to enter the construction trades.

This will involve introducing ECCCP to principals and other key staff and helping students and parents learn about the program.

2. Development jointly of pre-apprenticeship curriculum and other school-related activities to promote construction employment.
3. In addition to the development of the summer pre- apprenticeship curriculum, ECCCP will assist interested districts to develop a year-round construction careers curriculum.
4. Maximize utilization of contractors who use registered apprentices on major school construction projects.

Since EDA is responsible for awarding of construction contracts for Abbott districts, school districts will use their best efforts to ensure that EDA will award contracts to contractors that include registered apprentices on major job sites. In the case of non-Abbott school districts, the district would solicit bids that provide incentives for contractors to include registered apprenticeships on major job sites.

5. Promote enforcement of prevailing wages on school construction sites.

B. Building Trades

As a member of the Joint Steering Committee, Building trades participants agree to undertake the following:

1. Joint development of pre-apprenticeship curricula and programs that allow graduates to enter apprenticeship positions in the construction trades.

For the summer 2001 program, this will involve collaboration with project staff to develop courses in the pre- apprenticeship program that will adequately prepare graduates to participate in apprenticeship positions. Of critical importance will be the provision of information on apprenticeship requirements and application procedures.

2. Reserve apprenticeship positions for graduates of the ECCCP Pre-Apprenticeship Program.

Each participating trade will reserve apprenticeship positions for project applicants who successfully complete the pre-apprenticeship course sponsored by ECCCP. The number and timing of apprenticeship positions will be identified in sufficient time to ensure that each pre-apprenticeship class can be appropriately designed and implemented.

3. Other collaborative activities

C. As a member of the ECCCCP, a construction employer, agrees to:

*sponsor summer internships for college-bound high school graduates; summer placements would give high school graduates who are interested in construction related careers, on-the-job experiences.

D. As a member of the ECCCCP, a community agency, agrees to:

*plan and implement the outreach and recruitment program

*plan for and provide job counseling, transportation or other services needed by participants

*help plan course designs and participate in pre-apprenticeship classes

AGREED THIS DAY:

NAME

TITLE

ORGANIZATION

DATE

**ESSEX COUNTY CONSTRUCTION CAREERS
PROGRAM**

ADDENDUM A

PROGRAM TIMETABLE

JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 2001:

THE FEASIBILITY STUDY DETERMINED THAT ALL KEY PARTIES ARE READY TO JOINTLY PLAN AND OVERSEE A CONSTRUCTION CAREERS PROGRAM FOR ESSEX COUNTY.

FEBRUARY-MAY, 2001: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT:

Organize the Joint Steering Committee

Each member of the Joint Steering Committee signs the Memorandum of Agreement

Develop the program outline for the Summer 2001 Pre-Apprenticeship Program

The Project Consultant identifies funding sources; the Joint Steering Committee authorizes submission of funding requests to public and private funders.

Begin search for program director and staff

Support the March 31 Construction Careers Fair

JUNE, 2001: PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION: Start the Summer 2001 Pre-Apprenticeship Program

Students begin summer internships with contractors, engineers, and architects

Refer candidates for apprenticeship applications

Plan for a year- round program for 11th and 12th grade students

ADDENDUM B

ESSEX COUNTY CONSTRUCTION CAREERS PROGRAM

STEERING COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

The Steering Committee provides a mechanism to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in making decisions about the program.

Composition

At minimum, the following sectors should be represented;

- 1.. Each participating school district
2. Each participating building trade
3. Community based organizations with expertise in outreach and/or training
4. Construction contractors /and or other construction related employers(i.e. engineering, CM, or architectural).

Duties

The Steering Committee will:

1. Provide oversight and support to staff and consultants hired to implement the Planning and Development Phase of the project.
2. Review and ratify apprenticeship and internship slots that have been committed
3. Affirm and revise, if needed, the outreach and recruitment program to be implemented for Summer 2001
4. Determine whether the funding and organizational commitments are

sufficient to initiate the first pre-apprenticeship and internship program.

5. Organize and incorporate itself into a sponsoring agency if an existing agency is not identified to manage and operate the program.

ADDENDUM C

SAMPLE RESOLUTION TO BE PASSED BY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT RELATED TO APPRENTICESHIPS ON CONSTRUCTION SITES (IN PROGRESS)